

REGIONALIST PROJECTS OF ROGÉRIO DE AZEVEDO

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Abstract

In the work of the architect Rogério de Azevedo – mostly realised from end of twenties to forties – the regionalist option was always present. Sometimes by his own initiative, sometimes as an answer to the rules of governmental programmes.

Regardless of the condition of the State to work with regional types to built in series, supposedly respectful of local sensitivities, the constraints and technical materials led the architect to adopted techniques and appropriate languages, in a personal interpretation, where modernism and vernacular are mixed. Here a decisive factor is the counterpoint between the project for the city and the project for the rural environment.

If in some cases the State order was determinant, in others, particularly in projects of late twenties and early forties, the architect and his vision of the relationship between the placements, the materials available and expressive values that inform his work, are the reason of being of his works.

Keywords: Modern Architecture, Architecture Vernacular, Regionalism

The Estado Novo¹ developed numerous infrastructure construction programs and equipment in the thirties. The country, mostly rural and low economic development, has been object of a methodical and structural policy of public works carried out by the will and power of Duarte Pacheco, Minister of Public Works and Communications and Salazar man of action.

This is how the most talented and innovative architects of his generation '*build the new panorama of the works of the system*' (Tostões, 2003, p. 113) exploring unconstrained language of an internationalist model they already experienced, supported by the new construction methods, in an apparent adequacy of modernism to the official expectations.

But the modern option in this generation of embryonic modernist architects training, alternating in their practices with regionalism or historicist eclecticism, is not an ideological, social or philosophical question. For them the modern is just another style available, a new way to build integrating a functionalist and

¹ The Estado Novo [New State], by some also called Second Portuguese Republic, is the name of the authoritarian political regime, autocrat and corporate that existed in Portugal for 41 years, since the 1933 Constitution up to the 25 April Revolution of 1974.

rationalist conception of architecture (Martins, 1999, p. 121). It's a generational attitude, revivalist training eclectic, bet on linguistic renewal '*without integrating the ideological principles of international modern movement*' (Tostões, 2003, p. 110). On the other hand, the increasing use of international standards in the construction of modernist public facilities is understood by the power as another "style". A moderate style by monumentality and dignity values that are part of the meaning of public work. And the idea of modernity associated with the progress strengthens, at this stage, the image of the power.

Rogério de Azevedo does not escape the contradictions of its co-generation and also he designed some public facilities through a variety of languages. Examples of this are the Vila Flor and Póvoa de Varzim Municipalities (early thirties) or the Captaincy of the port of Viana do Castelo (1933).

But much of the equipment programs with expression at national level are developed using project-type regionalist matrix. These regionalist character concerns do not appear to be linked to an ideological position of those who order, the return values to a rurality that span the political speech or inspiring models of nationalist allegedly drawn, because at the time did not exist. And the Ministry of Public Works delivery implementation to modernist architects, external to their services, thereby circumventing the shortcomings of their structures.

Among these programs lies the Economic Houses, 1933. In it the Estado Novo defines its policy on social housing. It is an innovative policy in two ways: first because chooses the image of the english garden city in terms of city concept; second because establishing a new type of contractual relationship with the tenant to his home. In the monthly installment for the purchase of housing is associated with an insurance system of social protection as a means to secure the population.

Public intervention in housing the urban population of lower income is achieved through single-family housing, an anti-collectivist model '*more in line with the national character, more hygienic and more suitable for the material and moral strengthening of the family*' (Casas Económicas, 1943, p. 16).

The houses are presented from different classes aimed at different social strata. Only exceptionally, the construction of houses of all classes in the same housing development, could be authorized. However, *'in this case, the neighborhood had to be divided into different sectors, playing well, to her bosom, social zoning strategy officially defended'* (Gros, 1994, p. 87). With this model that create small clusters on the outskirts of cities. They define a differentiated urban space that approximates the model neighborhood of the city-garden. But, given its small size, its design *'identifies more with the garden suburb'* (Howell, 1999, p. 152).

The construction must be of *'portuguese savour, typically regional and can adapt to the building systems and construction materials from different regions of the country'* (Casas Económicas, 1943, p. 17). It is by following these precepts that the Neighborhoods Economic Houses, having expression in the urban fabric, present consisting of different types of villas with garden at the back and garden next to the main facade, thus breaking an idea of uniformity².



Figure 1. Neighborhood Economic Houses of Paranhos, Porto, undated. Archive DGEMN: SIPA, IPA nº PT011312100438, FOTO.0551323

² Worked in project design standard of the houses of all classes, all of which may present one or two floors, architects such as Raul Lino Correia, Rebelo de Andrade, Couto Martins, Alberto Cruz or Rogério de Azevedo, among others. With the implementation of the program are built new neighborhoods in Bragança, Braga, Covilhã, Lisbon, Porto, Faro, São João da Madeira and Vila Viçosa.

At first the Estado Novo gave greater emphasis to the house than to the neighborhood. However, the Economic Houses clusters built in the thirties, in Porto, were to include the building of Primary Schools type Douro sort of regionalised type projects, 1935, designed by Rogério de Azevedo, after minor changes.

As in all works carried out by the Ministry of Public Works, also the Neighborhoods Economic Houses were abundantly photographed. It sought not a documentary record but obtaining images to publicize their achievement through the publications of the National Propaganda Secretariat. Some of that photographic record of work in the neighborhoods of Porto fit the studio *Photographia Alvão*.

But perhaps the most paradigmatic case of the programs implemented by means of standard projects is the regionalized projects-types of Primary Schools officials to build in series, 1935.

Among the projects with the General Directorate of National Buildings and Monuments (DGEMN) began operations in 1929 are the *Schools Dr. Alfredo de Magalhães* in Viana do Castelo district. Rogério de Azevedo projected six of these schools. Them reflects the deep knowledge that holds about the school built heritage in the 20s and the concern to integrate locally and play with traditional or revivalist character details.

With the destruction of the Primary School of Lourosa, motivated by the need to free the Church from all outbuildings³, is ordered to Rogério de Azevedo the draft of a new school. This project of a school building two classrooms, hall, cloakroom, teachers and covered atrium room, consists of two staggered bodies organized along two orthogonal axes, a central body to articulate all the spaces and covered recreation in the hollow of volumetric composition, will contaminate or be reused by architect with variations in other primary schools that performs in the thirties.

³ Current practice in restoration work for conducting surveys and studies for the restoration of monuments. In this case the work was started by order of Dr. Alfredo de Magalhães and profusely accompanied by the magazine *Ilustração Moderna* and by Eng. Henrique Gomes da Silva (Director-General DGEMN).

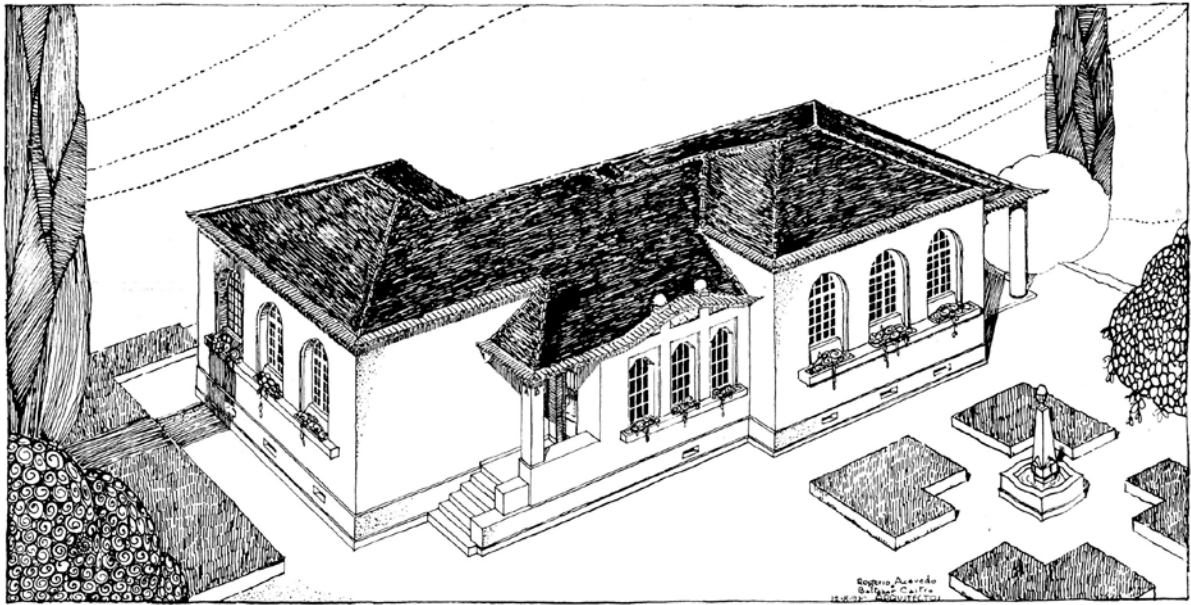


Figure 2. Primary School of Lourosa, Oliveira do Hospital. Project architects of Rogério de Azevedo and Baltazar de Castro. Axonamétrica Vista, 1930. Ass., Dat.: Rogério Azevedo and Baltazar Castro, architects, 12/08/1930. *Ilustração Moderna*, 5th year, No. 46, August 1930, p. 192.

But the General Directorate approved or materialize projects expressing various concepts held by different authors. Including the architect Jorge Segurado⁴ working intensively in school buildings, but without the inclusion of regionalist concerns taken by Rogério de Azevedo.

In the early years of this decade, the system aims to establish itself in rural society⁵ by establishing a regime that refers to the local authorities a share in the works of 50% of its value. Many of the school buildings are constructed by popular initiative, other donated or subsidized by benefactors⁶.

It is in this context that Rogério de Azevedo develops, in collaboration with Januário Godinho, the School-Canteen project in Alijó (1930). It is an

⁴ Jorge de Almeida Segurado (1898-1990) developed several projects for school buildings, including the town of Estremoz (1931) and the town of Pombal (1932); project type for the Primary Schools of the Municipality of Cascais (1931); building for Schools of Social Neighborhood Arco do Cego, Lisbon (1932); Central School Infante D. Henrique, Angra do Heroísmo (1933) among many others.

⁵ Decree No. 19502, March 1931 (published 03/24/31), defined the *Rural Improvement* policy, stipulating a scheme for the *construction, repair and adaptation of roads and schools*, allowing the allocation of budget subsidies general State.

⁶ This gesture is encouraged by the State that gives donors the right to indicate people for placing teachers in these schools. Decree No. 19531 of March 30, 1931.

architecture built in granite, robust and thick, in dialogue with the materials and the transmontana landscape, '*volumetrically characterized from the organization of the plant*' (Tavares, 2012, p. 35).

Since 1932 that existed in DGEMN an architecture section, headed by architect Guilherme Rebello de Andrade, ready to make new Primary Schools projects. Of their efforts resulted in the presentation of a *Memory*⁷, in 1933, in which the precepts to be met by the school buildings to be constructed by the government are defined. In this *Memory* are some rules that previously had not been defined.

On the first page appears written that projects should be designed '*in accordance with the characteristics of the regional architecture, imposed not only by the application of these materials own regions but also by climate changes*'. And explicit the idea: it is intended to the assimilation of new buildings for the people, not hurting '*their ethnic sensitivity*' with exotic elements of a "rationalism" forced, despising the tradition. Moreover, it is believed that such "rationality" well understood, it takes local elements, combining them with the new construction features.

On the next page are established three main conditions for the design of plants:

1st - with the plan of a school for a place school-unit, solve the plants from other schools;

2nd - design those plants to be able to take advantage of all the land whatever exposure to North;

3rd - standardization of the construction of schools, for groups, even though these groups are formed by schools of different numbers of places.

The mainland is divided into six regions through the affinities in building materials resources, manpower, construction processes and climate: Algarve;

⁷ *Ante-projecto do Plano Geral de Tipos-Regionaes de Escolas Primarias Officiais a Construir em Série – Memória*. Lisbon, 14 December 1933. Ass. The Architect Chief of Section Guilherme Rebello de Andrade. Process *Expediente-Geral*, the DGEMN - DGCE Archive.

Alentejo; Extremadura; Beira-Litoral; Beira Baixa, South; Beira Baixa, North, Beira-Alta, Minho and Trás-os-Montes.

While the projects for the South districts are delivered to Raul Lino, the districts of North and Central are the responsibility of Rogério de Azevedo.

Based on the designed project in 1930 for the School of Lourosa, he chooses to simplify it starting from the classroom idea as a space cell, an idea already present previously and consequently used in the projects of primary schools which had meanwhile realized. Following a functional orientation presents a number of variations of the same basic type of building in the composition by adding cells/rooms that are repeated, and setting the maximum standardization. The school's central space is the classroom.

However some schools are built in response to requests met in each case. The special project of the School-Canteen Salazar (1938) is one of seeing authorized its completion. The school is built in a peri-urban area, set the hillside, adapting to the morphology of the terrain that has a steep slope. Built in granite and featuring a rectangular, composed and irregular, and a horizontal arrangement of the masses, consists of volumes and cover different roofs, arches in the covered playground and a relative absence of decorative elements, offering however two faces . While the main elevation reflects, in continuity, projects of regional-type schools, since the rear elevation, with some distance and creative freedom from this image, and taking advantage of the slope, the recreational space and the arrangement of rooms class, has an almost organic composition, strong and deeply expressive in the relationship between mass and openings.



Figure 3. School-Canteen Salazar. Vimieiro, Santa Comba Dão. Current photo. Archive DGEMN: SIPA, IPA nº PT021814080009, FOTO.4051935.

Rogério de Azevedo had created throughout his work, and from various elements base, *'types whose adaptability and flexibility solutions are best expressed in the special project of the School-Canteen Salazar', 'work that synthesizes the values set in projects- type regionalised that are prior'*, not also failing to refer to the project Primary School of Lourosa (Pimentel, 2014, p. 55).

With the regionalised standard projects was initiated to a purification process of the constituent areas of the school buildings. By the late 60s the evolution of these buildings will be seamless. Although technical and functional alterations projects always present the same concept space-school, diluting the language expresses them through a progressive impoverishment of the implemented solutions.

On the other hand the program of the Regional Inns of 1938-39, not a project-type program, had as preconditions regionalism and the idea of a building

model. One option already clearly political and corollary of a path statement values consistent with the spirit of the Centenary Commemorations 1940⁸.

In order to convey an image of progress and renewal and simultaneously combat penetration in the country of any solvents and disturbing ideas of unity and national interest, the Estado Novo creates in 1933 the National Propaganda Secretariat (SPN)⁹.

Led by Antonio Ferro, and in order to mobilize the arts and letters for viewing system, contributes to the affirmation of artists and modernists during the thirties. However, the most innovative were already connected to important interventions whose design predated the creation of the SPN.

With the '*great mission*' to '*raise the spirit of the Portuguese in knowledge than it really is and it*' - words of Salazar in the inaugural speech (Acciaiuoli, 1998, p. 14) - the *policy of the spirit* then created by Antonio Ferro, develops a structurally holistic and integrative mode (Portela, 1982, p. 59). Looking cover various areas in a multidisciplinary way and in order to reveal the country in its cultural and popular aspects, tourism will be used by the Estado Novo to launch the country's image abroad.

In October 1933 opens the traveling exhibition of "Hotel Modelo", constituted by the report of eight architectural projects of regional hotels prepared by eight young architects invited, culmination of a campaign on national tourism issues launched by the magazine *O Notícias Ilustrado*, directed by Leitão de Barros, and with the support of the National Tourism Council and the CP (Portuguese Railways) and a program-regulation prepared by Raul Lino. Having shall be intended to provide guidance models to the private sector for the construction of hotel facilities that have the character of large family inns, very comfortable, but devoid of all the false luxury, according to the regionalist principle, both the formal level and in experience of the buildings in an attempt to establish a pedagogy for new developments in the sector, bucking the trend for performing

⁸ Celebrations of the Double Centenary of the Foundation (1140) and Restoration (1640) of Portugal in 1940.

⁹ Refurbished in 1944, is now calling itself the National Secretariat of Information, Popular Culture and Tourism (SNI).

'false and pretentious "Palaces"' (Ferro, 1949, p. 48) built outside major urban centers.

Above all

Above all matter look for architectural reasons in the tradition or regional character, giving preference to the locality materials employment in order to ensure respect for the landscape elements, the regional tradition, the picturesque (Martins, 1999, p. 125).

These concerns and the influence of their underlying programming model as well as the *Pouzadas*¹⁰ thesis presented at the First National Tourism Congress in 1936, will be accompanied by António Ferro, with its constant presence in politics for tourism developed by him.

In 1938, the sector project of António Ferro begins to gain expression. In addition to the historicist and popular tourist circuits other networks are regarded as essential: that of the tourist offices and inns. It is designed to plan a network of Regional Inns distributed throughout the country,

within a design to innovative time that combined a patent modernized dynamism – through the new comfort and systemic character/national initiative – with a conservative and regionalist sense which called for a "return to traditionalism" (Fernandes 1999, p. 159).

The a necessary standardization of tourism, expression of a country's tourist point of view '*designed as a grand drawing*', against '*the demon of individualism*' and the action of '*amateur architects and painters*' (Ferro, 1949, pp. 40 -41), António Ferro associates the concept of difference, a country in parallel and different from others, emphasizing the popular character of resources, looking

¹⁰ *Pouzadas*. Thesis by Francisco de Lima. I National Tourism Congress, Section IV, Lisbon, 1936. It involved the study for the creation of a new type of tourist equipment, simpler and economic thought to the great mass, which is neither the 'Palace' or the 'Hotel' and should always have the national and regionalist nature, either in its construction or in your furniture. It is a close approach expressed in *O Notícias Ilustrado* and exposure of "Hotel Modelo" or on aspects such as location, either in design or in the premises or at the furniture, the type of meal and exploitation. The inspiration for the concept and the new equipment program comes from the *Parador* counterparts and especially the Spanish *Albergue de Carretera* – small hotels targeted refuge for travelers and their cars, strategically distributed throughout the Spanish territory divided in several steps routes between major cities.

instill them in their interlocutors - Commissions and Tourism Joints tutored by local councils.

These different aspects are summarized in *reaportuguesamento* campaign of Portugal inspired on 'fundamentalist ideas in the mythical rurality, late of peasant origins, and which was applied by the regionalist staging the Estado Novo' (Melo, 2001, p. 252), a process of the country's image transmutation, giving

unity to all these different countries within the same country, a purely national life, with a picturesque high, in strong, solid colors, and above all, an admirable people, aristocrat by instinct, which sometimes can't read but that feel and understand as few (Ferro, 1949, p. 36).

Salazar had given the tone as refers Paulo Pina (1988, p. 151):

I do not know where the *reaportuguesamento* work of our social and political institutions, and the cult of good, healthy, fruitful national traditions, so own to give the originality and character, they will raise major difficulties and not be preferred to slavish copying how to think and do in a foreign country, inspiring much of our activity for a long time. Moreover, this effort is homage to the creative spirit of the Lusitano breed and its power of initiative, which will be fruitful if the persistent work of *inner* discovery not give way to lazy imitation of strange creations.

It definitely broke with the apparent *spirit* of openness of the early years of the SPN in which the need to work had enabled experiences in the languages used.

The projects of the inns to be built by DGEMN in 1939 and 1940, are still delivered in 1938 to three of the architects of the modernist generation who had already demonstrated the ability to dialogue with traditionalist values: Miguel Jacobetty Rosa¹¹ are ordered the South of the country inns (Santa Luzia in Elvas; Santiago in Santiago de Cacém, São Brás in São Brás de Alportel); Rogério de Azevedo are delivered the North inns (São Gonçalo in the Serra do

¹¹ Miguel Simões Jacobetty Rosa (1901-1970) was one of the closest collaborators of Duarte Pacheco.

Marão, Santo António in Serém, Vouga Valley, São Lorenzo in the Serra da Estrela)¹². The inn from the center of the country (São Martinho in Alfeizerão, S. Martinho do Porto) is delivered to Veloso Reis Camelo¹³.

Their locations are thought of as an intervention strategy in the territory. They aim to provide the country with modern hotel facilities and are responsive to the needs objectively acting on the national territory, '*building a coherent and rational structure*' (Lobo, 2006, p.44).

Rogério de Azevedo could have had an important role in the choice of the exact locations of the inns by he designed and clearly assumes the use of extracted materials from construction sites themselves¹⁴.

With a program and guidance attached to DGEMN by the Government, ie by Duarte Pacheco, the plan to build seven Regional Tourism Inns will be materializing over nine years with the successive conclusions of the construction and subsequent delivery to the authority of the SPN , the entity responsible for the exploitation, inspection and award to private dealers.

In 1942 was inaugurated the first of seven inns built from scratch: the Santa Luzia in Elvas¹⁵. The first of seven small hotels that do not should look like hotels, with the interiors arranged by the Tourist Office and SPN technicians, and where guests should feel '*constantly*' in the region where they are without breaking the '*continuity between inside and outside, between the house and the field*' (Ferro, 1949, pp. 68-69). And the openings will be happening until 1948¹⁶.

¹² Januário Godinho have collaborated with Rogério de Azevedo in the development of these projects, according to the corrected version, and signed by Januário Godinho to 07.15.1988, the academic work done by students in FAUP Antonio Neves, Fernando Lisboa, Pauol Cortez and Vítor Seabra, which contains a chronology of the life and work of architect Rogério de Azevedo. Estate of Januário Godinho, Maria de Fatima Alves Sales file.

¹³ Antonio Maria Veloso Reis Camel (1899-1985). Author of several projects of buildings in Lisbon awarded the Valmor Prize (1931, 1942, 1945) among others.

¹⁴ See in this regard *Pousada para Serra do Marão. Memória*. Rogério de Azevedo. Porto, 15 February 1939. *Pousadas. Processo Geral*. IHRU: SIPA.

¹⁵ The first state inn, the Inn of Lidador (Óbidos), inaugurated on August 16, 1940, was an old converted pension.

¹⁶ Pousada de Santa Luzia, Elvas - Jacobetty Miguel Rosa project, 1939, Vera Leroi and Ane-Marie Jauss decoration, inaug. April 19, 1942; Pousada de São Gonçalo, Serra do Marão / Amarante - Rogério de Azevedo project, 1939, José Luís Brandão de Carvalho decoration, inaug. August 29, 1942; Pousada de Santo António, Serém (Vale do Vouga) - Rogério de Azevedo project, 1939, Carlos Botelho decoration, inaug. September 24, 1942; Pousada de São Martinho, Alfeizerão / São

Of the seven hostels, all designed the same time and with construction started at the same time, with the exception of Santiago de Cacém, the penultimate being opened, we can highlight the group of buildings of the Elvas and Marão. Are buildings that have a clear idea that draws them from the simple house, domestic housing scale either by the way the program was interpreted them, both for its formal compositions, either by the way they were attached to the land.

In Marão, as in the Serra da Estrela, along with a more compact organization of space there is a skillful use of the full capacity of the building, common value to Rogério de Azevedo projects that *'lets do without a monumentalization small-scale'* (Becker, 1997, p. 192) and simultaneously reinforces the opening of the interior spaces of the landscape.



Figure 4. São Gonçalo Inn, Serra do Marão. Image file.
<http://restosdecoleccion.blogspot.pt/2012/01/primeiras-pousadas-de-portugal.html>, May 21, 2012, 18:00.

Martinho do Porto - Veloso Reis Camelo project, 1939, Veloso Reis Camelo decoration, inaug. August 25, 1943; Pousada de São Brás, São Brás / Loulé - Jacobetty Miguel Rosa project, 1939, Vera Leroi and Ane-Marie Jauss decoration, inaug. April 11, 1944; Pousada de São Tiago, Santiago do Cacém - Jacobetty Miguel Rosa project, 1939, Vera Leroi and Ane-Marie Jauss decoration, inaug. February 10, 1945; Pousada de São Lourenço, Serra da Estrela / Manteigas - Rogério de Azevedo project, 1939, Maria Keil decoration, inaug. March 14, 1948.

The remaining buildings it appears that the Santo António of Serém and S. Brás of Alportel Inns are those that come closest to the idea of a type in common, near the domestic environment. But the building of the São Lourenço Inn, by their appearance debugged, compact and with a strong foundation, breaks this possible identity and the Santiago do Cacém Inn that, while setting a foundation, is marked by a strong axialidade. The building of the São Martinho do Porto Inn is what is closest to the idea of a housing block unrelated to the ground.



Figure 5. São Lourenço Inn, Serra da Estrela, Manteigas.
Imagem file. <http://restosdecoleccion.Blogspot.pt/2012/01/Primeiras-pousadas-de-portugal.html>, May 21, 2012, 18:00.

Regionalism is fulfilled the program through seven small buildings formally very different, which show '*conceptual schemes prior to formal parties*' (Tavares, 2012, p. 49), in particular the recognition/choice of place as the starting point for the definition a strategy, with the scale of a particular house or a small hotel, playing with the '*programmatic distribution of the floors*' (Lobo, 2004, p. 89) and the panoramic dining room, consisting of articulated pure volumetrics, cylindricals and prismatics, of Modernism, concealed under the weight of roofs and eaves, the arcades, porches and pergolas, covered in stone or whitewashed

plaster, the flavour of the regions, in an ordered and coherent synthesis of building systems and formal suggestions from many sources.

With the publication by SNI the book *Turismo, Fonte de Riqueza e de Poesia* (Ferro, 1949), António Ferro speeches collection conducted between 19 November 1939 and 11 October 1948, and the book/guide *Pousadas do S.N.I.* in 1949, with photographs of João Martins (Tavares, 2002, p. 52) - true storefronts done, its underlying ideas and the future preview - closes a cycle of *policy of the spirit* related to tourism in Portugal.

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